



## Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact [support@jstor.org](mailto:support@jstor.org).

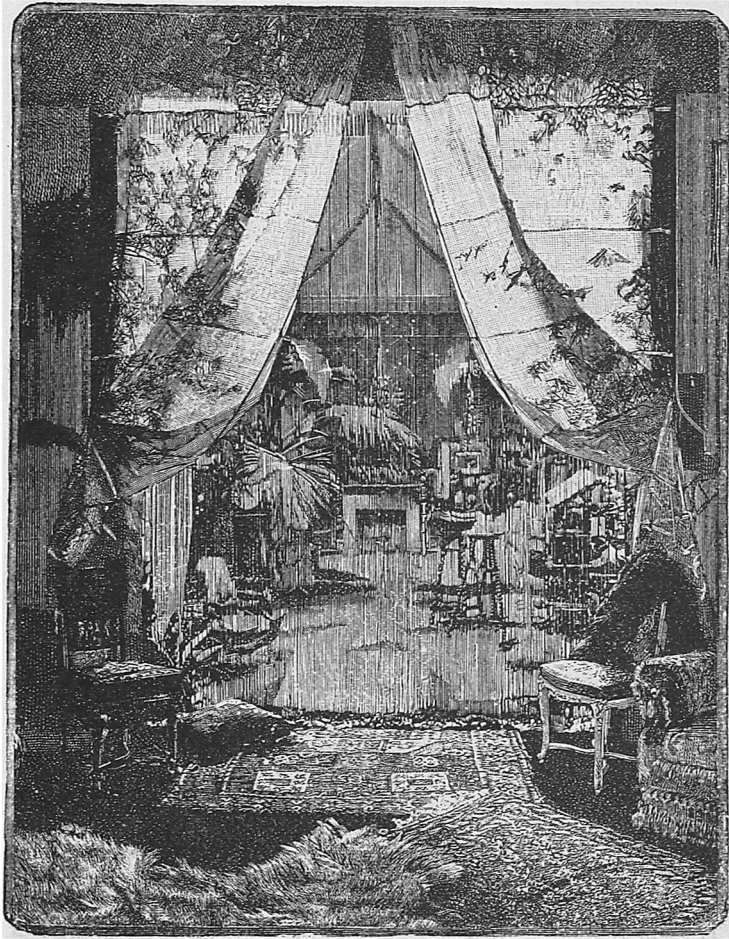
# THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER.

## HISTORIC DECORATION.—I.

BY PAUL ROVAIX.

is an exquisite miniature representing an idol, in hieratic robes, flying. There are chests encumbered with gew-gaws, credence tables supporting pottery, caskets of jewels, cabinets full of books, pamphlets and portfolios. There are chairs of all sorts and shapes, serving as easels for pictures. Here is an aquarelle by Doré, there a fan by Bethune, there two birds by Giacomelli, there paintings of peasants by Fichel, soldiers by Detaille, and ragamuffins by Gavarni. There is a marble statuette by Rachel, and there are chimeras in bronze, and comic groups in clay from Mexico. But we must put a stop to this inventory.

"You see, here is a statue of cupid leaning on a scythe that I have chiseled," said Sarah. "I will put death behind it, shall I not? I must put it there. Here, also is a man's head close to the head of a woman. These are the victims, you understand." And with the pretty arch gesture of a spirited child, Sarah was explaining to us the details of the little statue she was at work upon, and, as she spoke, we thought her so undulating, so feline, so charming in her morning custom of



IN THE JAPANESE SALON.

mauve plush, that she, also could be portrayed as a cupid with her cruel scythe, with innumerable victims heaped up around her, with the hearts of dreamers, of poets and artists, for whom, in the dull sky of the commonplace, she is the resplendent star.

**THE DECORATOR AND FURNISHER** is a publication for the use of everyone interested in a beautiful home.

It tells how to decorate and furnish ordinary houses, showing how artistic merit can be secured with an economic outlay of money.

It publishes practical charts, showing how to decorate and furnish city flats.

It publishes beautiful charts, showing how to decorate and furnish country cottages.

It describes and illustrates the latest ideas in furniture and general furnishings.

It describes and illustrates the latest styles in window draperies and upholstery fabrics.

It publishes decorative designs for walls and ceilings.

It tells everything there is to know about porcelain and pottery.

It describes new processes of embroidery, as applied to draperies and dresses.

The yearly subscription is only four dollars.

**E**VERY artist brings into the practice of his art his particular temperament, his individual turn of mind, his conception of the ideal, the qualities of his imagination, the memories more or less clearly defined of the medium of ideas, sensations and feelings in which he has lived.

Works can, therefore, serve to retrace the individuality of him who created them; from their examination can be singled out certain peculiarities, certain differences, which distinguish him from other artists, and constitute his originality. For this the view of a single work would be insufficient; but all of them must be considered as a whole, their elements must be noted, as well as the motives and details that are reproduced through them, and a search must be made through the variety of materials, of forms and of objects which those works present, those among them for which the artist appears to have had a special preference, end which he has been most willing to repeat.

To discover the wanted manner of an artist in the multiplicity of works which have come from his hands, to mark out this recurrence of similar or analogous decorative features, is to reconstitute his style.

As in literature the style of one writer differs from the style of another in that he expresses the same ideas in a different manner, so a cabinet of Boule differs from another by Caffieri; and the style of Bérain is not the same of the decorator Meissonnier.

What is true of individuals is also true of respective periods.

Each period expresses through its decorative arts its peculiar temperament, its turn of thought, its conception of the ideal, and reflects the general tendencies of the public mind.

If the works of a period be examined as a whole, certain tendencies, certain preferences for some particular materials, some special forms, some distinctive effects, are found to have preponderance over the others. To group these analogies, these resemblances, is to reconstitute and establish the style of that period.

So it will be found that the works of the time Louis XV. have in common certain peculiarities of materials, of forms and effects, which together will furnish a conception of the style Louis XV.

There are then the style of the individual and the style of the period.

The community of institutions, manners, history, language and ideas, constitutes the temperament of the people, of a race, of a civilization, whence comes forth a third style, characteristic not of an individual or of a period, but of a people through the whole course of time, as, for instance, the Arabian style.

Style is merely an abstraction. Pure, absolute style does not exist in reality. A work belongs to one style rather than to another, but there does not exist, for instance, a work in the style of Louis XVI. which may be considered as this style itself, and in which no element foreign to style Louis XVI. can be found.

Certain styles, in which a nascent style becomes discretely mingled with that which is declining, are called mixed styles, or styles of transition; for instance, the style "Régence," at the beginning of the eighteenth century, is a transition between the styles Louis XIV. and Louis XV.

A style can be identified by its characteristics, which may be reduced to four: Characteristic Impression; Characteristic Geometric Scheme; Characteristic Materials; Ornamentation.

Ornamentation gives us the simplest indications; impression is the most refined, the subtlest characteristic.

It must be observed that when we are in the presence of a work of some given style, this work impresses us at the outset in a peculiar manner which, vague as it is, awakens in our minds a presumption tending to the determination of its style.

Our next impression is that of its form as a whole.

The materials which have been brought together in its composition will furnish valuable indications of the period to which it belongs. For instance, porcelain, mahogany, &c., do not make their appearance in the decorative arts before a certain date.

The characteristic of ornamentation, although the most important, only follows the other three, and comes after the feeling produced, the design of the whole, and the nature of the materials.

(To be Continued.)